Police Minister Paul Henderson has today revealed a document showing the former Government distorted the facts on police numbers.

Mr Henderson tabled the letter, from former Commissioner Brian Bates to former Under Treasurer Ken Clarke, while appearing before the Budget Estimates Committee.

"The letter confirms what we have long suspected – the former government massively overstated the real story about police numbers," Mr Henderson said.

"In Commissioner Bates’ own words, the only civilianisation of positions carried out under the CLP "occurred by leaving police positions vacant but retaining the establishment numbers "on paper"."

"Police were put into civilian jobs - but still counted in police numbers - and money was taken out of operational budgets to pay for civilian positions left unfunded by the CLP.

"At last, Territorians can see the real picture behind the CLP’s staffing of our police force."

The Government has allocated $3 million in the 2003-04 Budget to fill the funding gap for the civilian positions.

"Police can now more effectively do their important job of keeping our community safe," said Mr Henderson.

"We are on track to meeting our commitment of increasing police establishment by 50 officers and will further increase numbers to meet the recommendations of the O’Sullivan Report."